



city of  
**greenville**

# News Release

## **GREENVILLE NAMED A PLAYFUL CITY USA FOR FOURTH TIME**

**(Greenville SC)** This week, KaBOOM!, in partnership with the Humana Foundation, announced that Greenville is among 212 cities and towns across the United States named as 2014 Playful City USA honorees. This is the fourth year that Greenville has received this honor.

The KaBOOM! Playful City USA program, sponsored by the Humana Foundation, honors cities, towns and communities across America that are taking bold steps to ensure that all children have easy access to balanced and active play in their communities. Cities being recognized span every region of the country, and according to KaBOOM!, are leaders in playability – the extent to which a city makes it easy for kids to get balanced and active play – and are making play part of the solution that can move the needle on countless urban challenges.

According to Parks & Recreation Department Director Dana Souza, the City's vision is for every child in the city to have the ability to access quality and fun-filled play opportunities in the City's parks, playgrounds and green spaces, and for every family to understand the importance of play for a child's well-being, as well as their mental and physical development. "We strive to reach children in all communities and of all abilities," said Souza. "We accomplish this by offering free or low cost recreation and athletic programs and opportunities; by continuing to monitor and improve our existing playgrounds and play spaces so that they are safe and accessible and by utilizing our Mobi-Rec vehicle, as well as other creative methods of taking play opportunities to children in our communities."

Demonstration of "significant collaboration" is an important criteria for Playful City USA honorees, and according to Pam Davis, the City's recreation programs manager, the City partners with several agencies, schools and organizations to address play-related needs in the city of Greenville. "We partner with LiveWell Greenville and United Way of Greenville, and work with other recreation agencies so that the children they reach can participate in our programs, such as Summer Community Youth Baseball," said Davis. "By partnering with them, and a variety of others, we are able to reach more children who may have barriers to accessing play."

In 2013, the City partnered with Furman University's Diversity Leadership Institute to equip a box truck with recreational materials, such as games, activities, athletic equipment, arts and crafts and other play opportunities. The City also partnered with LiveWell and five other parks and recreation agencies in Greenville County to offer the Park Hop program, which is continuing this summer. Other partnerships include various neighborhood associations, churches, the Greenville County Library System and local colleges and universities, whose students often serve as volunteers for programs that address play-related needs. Additionally, by partnering with Project Host, the City is able to provide hot meals to all of its afterschool program participants each day. The City also recently completed a renovation project at the David Hellams Community Center, which serves the Greenline-Spartanburg neighborhood and provides afterschool and summer day camp programs, and offers a wide variety of other programs to the community. In addition to making aesthetic and

structural improvements, the City redesigned the center so that the space is more flexible for a diverse range of programs.

“The City of Greenville is excited to work in partnership with KaBOOM! to promote play in our community, and our action plan for 2014 is built around meeting the needs that have been expressed to us by the citizens in Greenville,” said Souza. “One of our top priorities is to continue to build on and enhance the recreational programs we offer, so in addition to using our Mobi-Rec vehicle, we will also offer Playstreet events and move them to different neighborhoods.” Both options allow the City to go to those who want to participate in its programs without residents having to leave their neighborhoods. They also help the City’s programs be more inclusive and eliminate any issues participants may have with transportation. Other plans include building new restroom facilities at Cleveland Park and replacing the existing playground at Thompson Gardner Park with one that can accommodate more children.

To see the full list of 2014 Playful City USA honorees, or for more information about the Playful City USA program, visit [www.playfulcityusa.org](http://www.playfulcityusa.org).

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